

## 1. Shramik Mitras Emerge as Friends of Migrant Workers

Migrant workers remain deprived of the benefits of government services and welfare schemes because of migration. Notably, a large majority of the migrant workers is unable to get their voter identification card made. Due to the lack of identification documents they face a lot of problems in the period of migration and when they return home they hardly find anyone willing to help them locally.

Under the Migrant Workers Support Program being run by PEPUS, two Migrant Labour Help Center are operating. The centers have raised a cadre of volunteers known as Shramik Mitra for intensive outreach. The Shramik Mitras are trained from time to time by the organization to build their capacity to assist migrant workers and their families residing in the project area.

This narrative refers to a case of Kaju Gram Panchayat of Muratganj block of District Kaushambi. This region is predominantly populated by families belonging to Scheduled Castes or Dalits. They live under constant deprivation. Most of the people from this region emigrate to work in the brick kilns. A Shramik Mitra who belongs to the community namely, Gyan Singh son of Jokhulal, was trained to work among these migrant families. Gyan Singh's father is a construction labourer and the family is supported by his



labour. Gyan Singh has passed senior secondary and is proactive in helping the labourers. Right from the day he became a Shramik Mitra he is getting migrant laborers registered at the Labour Help Center and he himself distributes the Photo Id cards among the registered workers after collecting their Ids from the center regularly with commitment. Till date he has got as many as 150 migrant workers registered, as a result these workers can prove their identity definitively and do not face harassment from authorities during migration and are able to avoid other untoward incidents away from home.

Moreover, Gyan Singh also maintains his outreach in the village and keeps migrant community informed about the services provided by the Labour Help Center as well as several government schemes from which migrant community can benefit. Gyan Singh places emphasis on the registration of migrant workers in BoCW Welfare Board as it makes the workers eligible for 15 different types of welfare schemes provided by the board.

Gyan Singh, like other Shramik Mitras, is working hard on the objective of maximizing the registration in Construction workers welfare board so that the majority of them becomes beneficiaries of welfare schemes. To realize this end Gyan Singh has taken initiatives to raise the level of awareness within the community.

## 2. Technical Training, a Basis of Livelihood

Under the Migrant Support Program several vocational training programs for the youth of migrant families are being organized with an aim to develop better and sustainable livelihood options.

This case study is of Gram Panchayat Malak Nagar, block Muratgaj, district Kaushambi.

Ranjit Kumar, son of Dharampal belongs to a family in which wage labour is the chief source of income. His is a five member family and besides his father his elder brother, who lives separately, works as a helper in a furniture shop. Family has a tough time running on the father's income alone and Ranjit had to quit his studies after passing senior secondary and had to go to get a job in Allahabad city. Initially he worked in a departmental store and earned Rs. 4000 a month, not to his satisfaction. He returned to home shortly after quitting the job.

The day on which a canopy was set up in his village by Labour Help Center, Muratganj ,Ranjit Kumar came in contact with the staff of the center. Upon visiting the canopy Ranjit received information about the youth training programs and expressed his interest in receiving training in mobile repairing trade. He was told to visit the center by Mr. Rajkumar, a project staff. Upon visiting the center Ranjit was instructed to fill up the form for training in the trade of his interest.

Subsequently, with PEPUS' support, Ranjit went through a three month long training at Maa Saraswati Mobile Center.

After the completion of the training Ranjit Kumar worked for about 8 months in two different mobile shops and in the process became quite expert in the trade. Valuing his expertise, the proprietor of Maa Saraswati Mobile Center, Mr. Rana Sharma, hired him at his shop at Rs. 4000 a month.



In the meantime, another batch of 12 youth was readied for training in mobile repairing by PEPUS. This training was to be conducted at Maa Saraswati Mobile Center and Ranjit Kumar became the trainer for the batch and received Rs. 18000 as fee. Thereafter, Ranjit went on to set up his own shop—Lucky Vishwakarma Mobile Shop—at Jiwanganj Chauraha. Besides repairing mobile phones his establishment also offers photocopying and chip downloading and also sells charger and other items. As of now, Ranjit retains around Rs. 80000 after paying Rs. 700 a month rent for the shop and has become financially dependable to his family.

Ranjit Kumar is very pleased with these developments in his life, he not only runs his shop but also trains youth of workers' families. Till now he has trained 15 youth.

Along with Mobile repairing he plans to start photomaking shortly. Ranjit thanks PEPUS for the guidance and support.